

Supplement No. 127

November 5, 1908

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## "The Actor's Child"

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## The Actor's Child

A popular young actor and leading man of a New York theatre is married to a beautiful but selfish woman. Dazzled by a life of gayety and the pleasures of "The Great White Way," she allows herself to drift away from the protecting influence of her husband, whose busy life does not permit him to exercise the watchful care that he should over the companions chosen by his young and foolish wife.

Little Evelyn, the only child of the couple, adored by her father, is sadly neglected by the wayward mother, who in her pursuit of pleasure leaves the child to be looked after by the aged mother of her husband.

A smooth, unscrupulous libertine, Carroll Hewitt, the kind of moral leper usually to be found where life and beauty reign, recognizes the beauty and grace of Lawrence Grey's, the actor's wife, and determines in his black heart to drag her down to his own level. So cleverly does he exercise his arts over Laura Grey that she soon falls a victim to his wiles, and blinded to the real purpose of the cunning scoundrel, she allows herself to become so infatuated with him that she forgets all duty and respect to her faithful husband and sweet child, and with reckless abandon allows her name to be bandied from mouth to mouth in connection with that of her unprincipled friend.

Such news travels fast and soon reaches the ears of Lawrence Grey. The outraged husband is staggered by the blow, but still refuses to believe in his wife's absolute disloyalty without unmistakable proof. That soon is forced upon him on his way to the theatre for the evening performance. He sees it finally comes upon his wife and false

friend stepping from a carriage and entering a cafe. Although the friend who accompanies him tries to dissuade him, he follows them in and after questioning the proprietor learns that they have ordered a supper to be served in one of the private dining rooms. Bursting in the door the infuriated actor enters into the presence of the guilty couple, and maddened by the thought of his wife's perfidy, he grasps his false friend by the throat and would have throttled him but for the timely arrival of an officer who has been called in by the frightened waiter.

Hewitt is soon hustled out of the room, leaving the wife and husband alone. "Go," says the actor. "Follow that man. I never want to see your face again." Then shaking with emotion he buries his face in his hands and sinks sobbing upon the table. With a sneer the reckless woman, seeing that all is at an end between them, leaves the room.

We are next taken to the divorce court where a decree is granted the actor and the custody of Evelyn is allowed him. The wife objects strenuously to the judgment of the court regarding the child, and leaves vowing vengeance upon her former husband.

We are now given a glimpse of the stage back of the scenes, also the dressing room of the actor. So fearful is he that the mother will carry his little one away, he hardly allows her out of his sight. Consequently for a while she accompanies him to the theatre. The wife learning of this arrangement bribes a stage hand to kidnap the child and deliver it into her hands. The plan succeeds and little Evelyn is taken to an apartment where the vulture Hewitt is awaiting the return of the guilty mother.

Soon after the kidnaping the actor's valet discovers the little one's absence, and rushing to the wings conveys the intelligence to Grey, who at that time is in the midst of a dramatic scene. Without a moment's hesitation the anxious father dashes to the stage door and there learns the truth. Calling a cab he and the faithful valet are soon in pursuit of the fleeing woman. Arriving at the house where the child has been taken, Grey bursts in and confronts the destroyer of his peace. Little Evelyn rushes to her father's arms, but is torn away by the guilty mother. Then ensues a desperate fight between the two men. A lamp being overturned the room takes fire, and by a well directed blow the actor is left unconscious on the floor. Rushing from the house with the child, the heartless couple leave our hero to be burned to death and entering a cab are driven away. They are not unseen, however, for the faithful valet is watching without, and springing on the back of the cab is taken with them to a poor quarter of the city, where Hewitt enters an old rookery, carrying the strangled child. There she is turned over to the tender mercies of an old hag, who agrees for a consideration to keep her safely hid from the father. While they are agreeing upon terms the faithful valet has hastened back to the burning house where he finds his master, who reviving has fought his way through the flames. Calling a cab they are rapidly driven to the old rookery, and breaking in the door, arrive just in time to rescue the little one after a desperate struggle with Hewitt and his villainous accomplices. The police soon arrive after having been notified by the valet, and the criminals are all placed under arrest, while the happy father and his faithful servant rejoice over the return of the little one.